

PEOPLE & THINGS

IN New York, which I have just been visiting, it is strongly rumoured that Sir Pierson Dixon, at present Deputy Under-Secretary of State, will succeed Sir Gladwyn Jebb as our Permanent Representative to the United Nations. He will then be faced with the most difficult appointment of his career.

The United Nations has become a target for the current prairie fire of fear, intolerance and hatred which President Truman has more moderately described as "a wave of national hysteria." Seeing Reds under the bed is an established American pastime, but the United Nations flatiron building on the East River is accused of being nothing less than an annex of Moscow.

Put Out Fewer Flags

THAT this smear campaign is not without effect in quarters that should know better is illustrated by the fact that it has now been declared illegal to display the United Nations flag in equal prominence with the Stars and Stripes and the flag has consequently disappeared from the streets of New York.

There were always doubts about having United Nations headquarters in New York. San Francisco would have been preferable, or Vancouver, or Geneva, or London. New York has proved disastrous. Sir Pierson Dixon's appointment, if it is confirmed, will be appropriate. The atmosphere of purge and persecution will not daunt him. He was our last Ambassador in Prague.

The Steep Atlantick

AS the Queen Elizabeth plunged her graceful bows into Everestian seas and the few vertical passengers tried conclusions with the laws of gravity, I recalled a wartime remark of genius from Captain Charles Lambe, R.N., who, besides being of the same family as Lamb, the essayist, did much to help win the war at sea.

"The people," he observed, "who make maps and charts, show the sea as being blue and flat, or at any rate flat. It would be a great help to sailors if they would show it as it really is nine days out of ten—grey and very rough. Then Commanders-in-Chief in armchairs in snug maprooms wouldn't make one signals which assume that one can always average twenty knots to a rendezvous."

I wonder if Vice-Admiral Sir Charles Lambe, K.C.B., Commander-in-Chief, Far East Station, has ever found time to discuss his inspiration with The Hydrographer.

Bad Manners Maketh Man

TO a European visitor the manners of the New Yorker seem execrable. "Please" is not in their language and even the street signs—for instance the WALK/DON'T WALK notices at pedestrian crossings—bark at you. But judgment should not be too hasty. The New York idiom is a kind of shorthand and unnecessary words confuse and irritate.

In a cafeteria you just say "Coffee." If you say "May I have a cup of coffee please" you are talking double-dutch which will have to be unscrambled before the

By ATTICUS



Son



Father?

"I could not resist" (writes Mr. Bernard Cakebread, of South Woodford) "adding a few superficial details to the excellent Portrait Gallery photograph of Major Gwilym Lloyd-George. The details are the famous 'L. G.' locks and his moustache and bow-tie. But the resulting facial resemblance, as Mr. Cakebread points out, is remarkable."

message gets through. But you will also encounter a lot of unattractive toughness which is the product of an adolescent social code learnt almost in the cradle.

A friend was standing at the counter of a candy-store not long ago when a mite of about four or five came in off the street, took a toffee apple out of a jar near the floor, reached up on tiptoe and pushed a nickel on to the counter. The kindly salesman leant forward so that he could see his little customer. "Anything else, kid?" he inquired benevolently. The dear little fellow removed his tongue from the toffee apple. "Drop dead," he snarled, and marched out of the store.

Chandler—First and Last

IF you own a copy of "Blackmailers Don't Shoot," published in America in "The Black Mask" magazine of December, 1933, you have the first published story by Mr. Raymond Chandler and a valuable first edition.

This information was supplied by Mr. Chandler to that admirable quarterly "The Book Collector" which, in its current number, has done Mr. Chandler the honour of publishing a check-list of his published work.

Devotees of the master will be delighted to hear that the longest book he has ever written is coming next week from Hamish Hamilton.

It is called "The Long Goodbye." I have read page-proofs and, without encroaching on the province of the Literary Editor, I can recommend them to lay 10s. 6d. aside for C-Day.

State Secret

IHAVE caught an unauthorised glimpse of a swatch of the material from which the Army Tie will be cut, and I doubt if a more closely guarded secret will ever again be penetrated by Atticus.

The tie, which will be identical for Field-Marshal and Private, is of maroon silk, finely ribbed. At intervals of about an inch it is ornamented with a quarter-inch Army Crown in gold. The general impression is rich and ducorous, and my only criticism is that it will be more suitable for country than town wear. I expect it to be formally unveiled before Christmas.

Don't Let's be Beastly . . .

IT was an unhappy coincidence that I happened to be reading "V2—Der Schuss ins Weltall" ("Shot into the Blue"), by Dr. Walter Dornberger, at the same time that Professor Heisenberg, the Nobel Prizewinner, announced that West Germany planned to use nine tons of uranium a year to produce atomic energy for peaceful purposes. (My italics.)

Dr. Dornberger was the "father" of the V2 and in charge of Peenemuende throughout the war.

I translate: "The Versailles Treaty had restricted Germany's expansion in all matters of armament . . . The Ministry of Munitions was, therefore, understandably concerned with weapon-developments which would not conflict with the provisions of the Treaty . . . but the international control of heavy industry made it almost impossible to prosecute any secret weapon development unbeknownst to foreign countries.

"When, in the thirties, literature on rockets and experiments drew attention to the greater capacities of the rocket, the Ministry of Munitions . . . under General of Artillery Professor Dr. Becker, seized upon these ideas . . . with the object of studying the capacities and laws of powered rockets and of developing a light and cheap weapon."

Fourteen years later a de luxe model of this weapon was coming down on our heads.

Mehr Licht!

EVER since Mrs. Clare Boothe Luce became American Ambassador in Rome, Italian interests have been well to the fore in her husband's magazine "Life," whose five million readers have been regaled with almost every aspect of the Italian scene.

The exception is Italian sport. Soon this omission should be rectified. Time-Life Inc. are planning a new sports magazine. It is to be called "Muscles."

Mr. Luce's project for a British magazine on the model of "Time" has been dropped, and with it John Matthews, the scholarly former editor of the American "Time." He has been in London since the beginning of the year prospecting from Albany the barren field for his late chief.

Galgenhumor

A NEW YORK friend of mine, a detective in the Tenth Precinct, tells me that the following was Al Capone's favourite joke:

"Sorry to hear Smiler's dead. What happened to him?"

"He fell off a scaffold."

"What was he doing up there?"

"Getting hanged."